

IMPRESSIONS  
ON  
PAINTING

BY  
ALFRED STEVENS

TRANSLATED, WITH  
THE AUTHOR'S PER-  
MISSION, BY . . . .

CHARLOTTE ADAMS



NEW YORK  
GEORGE J. COOMBES  
No. 275 Fifth Avenue  
MDCCCLXXXVI







IMPRESSIONS  
ON  
P A I N T I N G





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V. NITZAN

Sein Leben wird  
durch seine Taten  
den Menschen vor  
sich führen

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# INTRODUCTION

TO THE

## AMERICAN EDITION

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AM pleased to see my "*Impressions on Painting*" translated for an American edition, because I have faith in the future of art in America, as I have already said in this book.

*I know the works of the American painters only through reproductions, often unfaithful. I have had, however, the opportunity of seeing, and of becoming acquainted with, the original productions of some of the artists of the United States who have studied in Europe, and I am convinced that not a few of them have undoubted talent.*

*Connaisseurs have especially remarked at the Paris Salon of this year the contributions of Young America.*

*The illustrators of the United States, artists of the first rank, particularly deserve*


*to fix our attention, by their initiative and the sureness of their inventive faculty.*

*François Millet was already appreciated at his proper value across the Atlantic when he was still unrecognised among us, for the elementary reason that a man is not a prophet in his own country. The new world, in love with our art, has purchased at high prices the masterpieces of the present epoch.*

*It is America that regulates prices in the European picture market. It must be admitted that artistic knowledge does not always preside at these purchases ; but I hasten to add that lovers of art for art's sake, infallible appreciators, are rare in all latitudes. A true appreciation of the beautiful is not within range of every one.*

ALFRED STEVENS.

## ALFRED STEVENS

HE name "Alfred Stevens" carries with it associations of peculiar grace and elegance in modern art. All Americans who know the picture world of Paris or Belgium, either through travel or from exhibitions in this country, can at once identify this name with groups of lovely women and children, executed with an admirable technique and bearing the stamp of unusual refinement and distinction.

M. Stevens belongs both to France and to Belgium. Born at Brussels in 1828, the son of an ex-cavalry officer, his early training gave him the literary bias proper to Belgian art, and his first pictures show the influence of the Belgian school. His later works proclaim him a Frenchman of the most

modern school, in technique and artistic thought.

The elder Stevens was a collector of pictures and one of the first appreciators of the works of Eugène Delacroix, which he purchased at a time when this great artist was scarcely recognized by the public. Who can tell what influence may have been exercised on the son by the father's admiration for a painter placed by the French art estimates of to-day among the great masters of the century? Delacroix was the painter of eclectics. That M. Stevens loves Delacroix is evident from the special mention of him made in the "Impressions."

The mother of M. Stevens was possessed of more than ordinary knowledge of art. It is not strange, then, that, born and bred among such influences, Alfred Stevens and his brothers should early have embraced artistic professions. M. Joseph Stevens is a distinguished animal painter at Brus-

sels, and M. Arthur Stevens is widely known as an art critic and the curator of the gallery of the King of Belgium.

M. Alfred Stevens went to Paris when seventeen years old. He studied under Camille Roqueplan and at the École des Beaux Arts; but he was his own best teacher. He first exhibited in 1853, and his picture, "La Descente de la Courtille," which received a medal, was purchased by the Museum of Marseilles.

What is particularly noticeable in the "Impressions" of M. Stevens is their contemporaneousness—their appreciation of the world of to-day, valued as artistic material—their abounding sense of actuality. Such was the bias of the painter from the outset of his career. He is and has always been, in feeling, a modern of the moderns. He has always had this fondness for his own time, this "love of modernity," as he himself expresses it. But, as a young man, in order

to live at all he was forced to paint subjects of the period of Charles IX., for at that time the public tolerated none but pictures representing a past epoch. The influence of French literary romanticism was then strongly felt in art.

M. Stevens suffered keenly from the tyranny of custom, but he freed himself from it as soon as possible. It is not singular that in his "Impressions" he should deal well-aimed blows at the academic, the pseudo-historical and the conventional. He presently came before the public as a painter of every-day life and scenes. The strong human sentiment of Belgian art, the elegance of the Paris world of fashion and a certain personal tenderness of feeling soon gave to his pictures an individual position in modern art. He stands by himself in the French art system, as well as in that of Belgium.

It is with the later works of M.

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Stevens that we in America are most concerned, partly because we have more of them among us, partly because they represent the worthiest results of his years of labor, and partly because they best illustrate the ideas and theories which sparkle in epigrammatic brilliancy on the pages of the "Impressions." Many of his pictures are owned by collectors of New York and of other cities in the United States. The museums of Brussels, Antwerp, Paris and London contain important examples of the master. The high esteem in which his work is held by painters is attested by the fact that much of it is bought by the younger French artists.

Alfred Stevens is preëminently a painter for painters. He is an impressionist in the highest artistic sense of the term. His impressionism is of the kind that, while accepting life as it is, strives for beauty and not for ugliness. Repose, grace, loveliness,

moral and mental harmony, are the elements of the ethical side of his art.

As a painter of women this artist might well be called the Balzac of the brush, for his tender and gracious rendering of the subtle beauties of the modern woman—and especially the Frenchwoman of fashion. One breathes in his compositions the atmosphere of the *grand monde* on its most exquisite, feminine side. He enjoys the distinction of having been the first painter to find his subjects in Parisian society. He was, too, probably the first of the Paris artists to feel the mysterious fascination of Japanese art. His sympathy with it is very great and he has assimilated much of its delicate decorative quality.

M. Stevens is a poet on canvas. He loves women, children, flowers, light, air and the sea. He has met with much success as a marine painter, and it is the suave, smiling aspect of the ocean that pleases him best. He

loves effects of moonlight ; he loves—as he himself says—this “planet which seems to have suffered, which poetises everything !”

M. Stevens leads in his home at Paris the simple life of a worker and of one in love with his art. He lives in the midst of a famous group of artists and men of letters. He has known all the great men of the century in Paris art and literature—Corot, Millet, Delacroix, who, together with Alexandre Dumas, fils, was a witness of his marriage, Ingres, Rousseau, Troyon, Diaz, Couture, Victor Hugo, Dumas, père, and many others, now numbered with the dead. He counts among his friends and acquaintances all the distinguished literary men of the day, from Zola and Daudet down ; and all the artists, from Meissonier to the youngest members of the painter guild.

The “Impressions on Painting” not only form a complete exposition

of the artistic creed of Alfred Stevens, but they represent the most modern and advanced side of French art, free from its diseases and exaggerations. They appeal particularly to our own young painters and art students, as well as to all among us who are interested in "art for art's sake."

CHARLOTTE ADAMS.

NEW YORK, August 9, 1886.



HAVE often, in familiar conversations, attributed to painters of greater age or authority than myself various reflections on art, in order to cause them to be accepted more easily. While I do not attach more importance than they deserve to improvisations of this kind, I have determined, acting on the advice of my professional friends, to now acknowledge their paternity.

I dedicate these thoughts to the memory of Corot, in testimony of my admiration for that great artist, the most modern of nineteenth century painters.



# IMPRESSIONS

ON

# PAINTING

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## I



MAN should bear the marks of his time and of his early education ; he should be subject to the influence of the sun beneath which and of the country in which he lives.

## II

It is not until a certain period of life that a man rightly understands his art.

## III

In painting, there are no phenomena ; prodigies like Pascal, Mozart, Pic de la Mirandole, etc., do not exist in our art.

## IV

The student should learn to draw, as much as possible, with his brush.

## V

There is no fine picture without fine color.

## VI

The greatness of a work is not to be measured by its dimensions.

## VII

Great workers must not be confounded with mere drudges.

## VIII

Every colorist is a lover of music.

## IX

The painter who, in the matter of art, believes himself a god, displays his weakness.

## X

Success too generally acclaimed belongs oftenest to mediocrity.

## XI

It is better to give a nail's breadth of one's self than an arm's length of what belongs to others.

## XII

In painting, everything is contrast, color as well as drawing.

## XIII

A painter is only great when he is a master-workman.

## XIV

Execution is the painter's style.

## XV

In painting, one can dispense with a so-called "subject." A picture ought not to need a literary description.

## XVI

All imaginative subjects, all caprices of the brain, are permitted to genius. With the painter of nature there is only the true.

## XVII

There are talents which give offence because they appear to be saying, "Behold us !"

## XVIII

The minor Dutch masters cause their faults to be pardoned because they always seem to say, "I have done my best ! Would that it were better !"

## XIX

One should formulate æsthetically and not imitate servilely.

## XX

A painter, however mediocre, who has depicted the era in which he lives

will become more interesting in time than he who, having more talent, portrays an epoch he has never seen.

## XXI

Fashionable costumes cause a smile as soon as they are out of date. Time alone gives them back their character. The "mignons" of Henri III., who interest us, must have become ridiculous under Henri IV.

## XXII

In modernity, the manner of social elegance is that which excites most criticism.

## XXIII

If you paint a blonde and the buyer's wife be a brunette, your picture runs the risk of hanging a long time in your studio.

## XXIV

Maturity is more difficult to paint than childhood or old age.

## XXV

A bust of Donatello is as eloquent as the Moses of Michael Angelo.

## XXVI

The "Victory" of Samothrace, in the Louvre, without a head and without arms, is quite as heroic as the bas-relief by Rude on the Arc de Triomphe.

## XXVII

I would rather have painted four bladders and a palette, as did Chardin, than the *Entrance of Alexander into Babylon* of Lebrun, the official painter of Louis XIV.

## XXVIII

The admiration inspired by tricky painters is fleeting.

## XXIX

A painter should not live on his memories; he should paint what he sees, what has just affected him.

## XXX

The higher one rises in art, the less is one understood.

## XXXI

Our epoch has a tendency to return to the early painters and to forsake the complex masters.

## XXXII

The more beautiful and *distingué* the subject, the more difficult it is to paint.

## XXXIII

Once the painter has a great artistic soul, the tortoise becomes as interesting as the horse, much more difficult to execute, the soul of the painter giving its imprint to everything.

## XXXIV

There should be no haste in the erection of a statue to a man. Neither should we hasten to introduce our

masters into the Louvre. Time alone is an infallible classifier.

## XXXV

In pictures of animals, the cow and the sheep have always brought higher prices than the horse. They are liked in general, without being studied. The horse finds connoisseurs and critics where art has very little to see.

## XXXVI

Paint a woman of a bygone age and the public and the artists themselves will have an indulgence for your picture which they would not have for a modern figure.

## XXXVII

One does not judge a picture justly until ten years after its execution.

## XXXVIII

Easel painting is the most difficult to execute.

## XXXIX

A painter is constantly at work, even outside of his studio.

## XL

Our century counts more great painters of landscape than of the figure.

## XLI

Talent being equal, the figure painter is superior to him who follows all the other branches.

## XLII

Painters depicting their own time become historians.

## XLIII

It is more difficult to put atmosphere into an interior than to paint open air.

## XLIV

Géricault was strongly influenced by his time and only related what he

saw. He therefore spoke before Courbet.

## XLV

The old masters rarely painted an epoch other than their own. The Bible is the history of the human heart, and they nearly always interpreted the subjects with the costumes of their own time.

## XLVI

The more one knows, the more one simplifies.

## XLVII

Woe be to the painter who obtains only the approbation of women !

## XLVIII

One should know how to paint a moustache hair by hair before allowing himself to execute it with a single stroke of the brush.

## XLIX

How many young painters put the cart before the horse !

## L

One can judge of the sentiment of an artist by a flower he has painted.

## LI

The painter who does not know how to "detach" a lemon on a Japanese plate, is not a delicate colorist.

## LII

A man's hand has the same expression as his face.

## LIII

What has been quickly done is quickly seen, unless the dexterity be the result of long and conscientious studies.

## LIV

Painters who, in spite of their talent, no longer make use of nature, disquiet me as to their future.

## LV

They will end by wearying the public through the abuse of exhibitions.

## LVI

The faculties are not artistic qualities.

## LVII

In painting, it is an art to know when to stop.

## LVIII

The ignorant man always desires to make a great display of knowledge.

## LIX

If one has unexpectedly done well, he may attribute his success to the effect of his previous study.

## LX

In a portrait, it is better to let the

sitter take an habitual pose than to strive for effect by an unusual one.

## LXI

Art criticism has a tendency to occupy itself more with the literary than with the technical side.

## LXII

Laboriously painted pictures, in which hard work is visible, please the public; it gets its money's worth.

## LXIII

In the art of painting, one must be a painter before all; the thinker comes later.

## LXIV

A picture, like a pretty woman, needs dress.

## LXV

Every painter, however bad he may be, has his little public, and is satisfied with it.

## LXVI

Before thinking of pleasing the public, one should be satisfied with himself.

## LXVII

An artist should first of all be a painter, and the greatest and finest "compositions" in the world are not worth a good bit of technique.

## LXVIII

Géricault, with a single figure, depicts the whole army of the First Empire.

## LXIX

A smile is more difficult to render than tears.

## LXX

An old woman is easier to paint than a young girl.

## LXXI

It is not necessary to go to the

East to look for light and for picturesque motives. To the penetrating painter everything everywhere is beautiful.

## LXXII

The artist prefers painting a blonde, because her hair blends more harmoniously with the skin than does the hair of a brunette.

## LXXIII

A picture ought not, as is vulgarly said, to stand out of the frame; it is the reverse that should be said.

## LXXIV

The artist in his maturity should have his convictions, but he should nevertheless wrap himself in pious meditation before his easel. The early masters undoubtedly made the sign of the cross before painting.

## LXXV

The *Gioconda* would have less success to-day than any battle.

## LXXVI

The nude is the great difficulty of art, and the man is more difficult to execute than the woman.

## LXXVII

An old slipper is more picturesque than the dancing shoe of a man of fashion.

## LXXVIII

Before a fragment of a destroyed work one ought to be able to say with certainty what masterpiece it is and to what masterpiece it belonged.

## LXXIX

Some great geniuses have felt the need of expending their strength rapidly, and in order to go faster, have adopted certain formulas. They are

less instructive than those who have interested themselves more directly in nature.

## LXXX

The masterpiece of God is the human face. The glance of a woman has more charm than the most beautiful horizon, and more attraction than a ray of sunlight.

## LXXXI

Before admiring a still-life, one must see if the painter has known how to treat the ground of his picture.

## LXXXII

In France fashion leads everything. Even in painting there are fashionable tones.

## LXXXIII

Art is made for the fastidious and passes over the heads of the vulgar. If it were not for this, it would no longer be art.

## LXXXIV

Those artists who were but lately doubted are no better understood to-day than before ; but, as speculation has adopted them and held them up to view, the sheep of Panurge flock after them.

## LXXXV

The great artists doubted by their contemporaries always had some disciples who cheered them in their hours of vexation.

## LXXXVI

The opinion of a connoisseur is more flattering than the commendation of the ignorant.

## LXXXVII

The arrangement of our little apartments demands light and luminous painting.

## LXXXVIII

A man is not vigorous because he is violent.

## LXXXIX

It is more difficult to remain vigorous in executing warm-toned, transparent painting than in employing intense tones.

## XC

Time renders sound painting more beautiful and debases the bad.

## XCI

Bad painting cracks in the form of the *sun*; good painting becomes a fine crackle.

## XCII

Flies do not restrain themselves with regard to bad painting; they respect good. Strange!

## XCIII

The specialist who puts the perspective into your picture mars it.

## XCIV

Without faith, one should not attempt religious painting.

## XCV

In general, great colorists are born by the sea.

## XCVI

True artists have a preference for ugly beauties.

## XCVII

The Museum at Versailles is an artistic mystification.

## XCVIII

Although the sun gives life to color, it is brutal at high noon, and becomes an anti-colorist.

## XCIX

The moon beautifies everything. It lends accent to sterile landscapes that the sun itself is powerless to animate, because it suppresses details and gives value only to the mass.

## C

The historical subject was invented the day that people were no longer interested in painting itself.

## CI

Japanese art is a powerful element of modernity.

## CII

The Japanese have better rendered all the manifestations of the sun and moon than the ancient or modern masters.

## CIII

The Japanese have made us understand that nothing in nature is to be

disdained, and that an ant is as well constructed as a horse.

## CIV

In Japanese art all is love, from the blade of grass to the divinity.

## CV

The Japanese are true impressionists.

## CVI

If one paints a peasant woman, one performs the act of a thinker; but if one paints a woman of society, one is held to perform an act of fashion. Why? A woman of society has nevertheless looked at the sky oftener than a peasant woman.

## CVII

Without ever dispensing with nature, at a given moment the painter should no longer allow himself to be dominated by her.

## CVIII

The invention of photography has made a revolution in art quite as great as that which the invention of railroads made in industry.

## CIX

Photography proves to us that art is much superior to this admirable invention; even if it found color, it would still be inferior to painting.

## CX

In looking at a picture, one ought not to have to suspect the artist of having called photography to his aid.

## CXI

Independence gives audacity to the artist.

## CXII

A commission for a picture is al-

most corrupting to the artist, since it injures his originality of impulse.

## CXIII

One commits an act of bad faith in having a model pose for the hands of a portrait.

## CXIV

In studios, the pupils drawing from models succeed better with the back view of the academic figure than with the front.

## CXV

A man is not a modernist because he paints modern costumes. The artist in love with modernity should, first of all, be impregnated with modern sensations.

## CXVI

All the masters have painted the Virgin and the Infant Jesus. It is always a mother and her son, and

this will be an admirable subject to all eternity.

## CXVII

Masterpieces are generally simple. A figure, a torso suffice to reveal a master.

## CXVIII

A great artist is generally a good critic, because he penetrates best into the arcana of things.

## CXIX

Why are there so many artists who wear the blouse all the year, only to put on the dress coat when it becomes a question of exhibiting at the Salon?

## CXX

As long as an artist has not obtained a recompense he thinks of Peter and Paul ; but from the day he is recompensed he most frequently believes himself to be somebody, for-

gets Peter and Paul, and is no longer anybody.

## CXXI

The masters of all countries and of all ages have practiced portrait painting, which is perhaps the finest of all kinds.

## CXXII

The Frenchman prefers the picture which he can complete with his thought.

## CXXIII

The painter should try to express himself in his work, and should do it with sincerity.

## CXXIV

The painter who always paints the same picture pleases the public, for the sole reason that the latter recognises it easily, and considers itself a connoisseur.

## CXXV

Art is aristocratic. The alphabetical list adopted for the classification of the Salon, for the love of democratic equality, is an outrage upon the legitimate prerogatives of talent.

## CXXVI

Draughtsmen, like colorists, are born, not made.

## CXXVII

There should be exhibitions every five years, where each artist should exhibit but a single figure, expressing nothing.

## CXXVIII

At the Salon the restless red-tails raise their voices, crying: "Come this way; then you shall see what you shall see!" Art counts for nothing therein.

## CXXIX

A spark of light, placed on an ac-

cessory by a Dutch or Flemish master, is more than an able touch of the brush—it is a stroke of intellect.

## CXXX

A foreshortening, a violent movement, are easier to draw than a simple and quiet movement.

## CXXXI

An artist strikes his note at the outset.

## CXXXII

The most interesting subjects are those which one can examine in all conditions of mind and heart.

## CXXXIII

Since the jury of the Salon has systematically rejected the works of painters who have become great masters, like Rousseau, Delacroix, Millet, painters whose works are justly re-

fused now make use of these great names to excuse their defeat.

## CXXXIV

Fine decorative art is too much confounded with theatrical and commonplace decoration.

## CXXXV

One should not enter the Louvre except he say to himself: "To-day I shall look at but five or six great masters!"

## CXXXVI

Nothing is as useful as comparison.

## CXXXVII

By looking at the palette of a painter, one knows with whom one is dealing.

## CXXXVIII

In our days talent runs about the streets, but genius is rarer than ever.

## CXXXIX

The physique has its predestinations. A badly constructed being has never arrived at the mastery in the plastic arts.

## CXL

Woman easily assimilates pictorial qualities, but she also stops with the same facility as soon as it comes to a question of creating.

## CXLI

More than fifteen hundred pictures should be removed from the Louvre.

## CXLII

The pictures of the masters at the Louvre should be spaced ; they would be more respected and admired.

## CXLIII

When one executes painting of a

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lofty order, one may not be a master, but one is meritorious.

## CXLIV

A finger of the portrait of Anne Boleyn, by Holbein, is as forcible as a whole portrait by Franz Hals.

## CXLV

Rubens existing, one could, perhaps, more easily do without the great Vandyke than a minor Dutch master.

## CXLVI

A fine picture, the effect of which is admired at a distance, ought equally to bear analysis when looked at near by.

## CXLVII

There are pictures full of talent, the subject and the quality of which forbid their entrance into drawing-rooms, and which ought to remain in the ante-room.

## CXLVIII

In painting, it is well to identify one's self with the seasons. It is a mistake to depict a winter subject in summer.

## CXLIX

Nothing does more injustice to a good picture than bad neighbors.

## CL

"I have never seen nature thus," say certain Philistines before a picture. Nothing is wanted but that they should view it with the intelligence of the artist! One should learn to see, as in music one learns to hear.

## CLI

Of what use is it for a young artist to wish to exhibit too soon and in spite of everything!

## CLII

What would the public have said

if, in the reign of Louis Philippe, the prediction had been made that fifty years later a statue would be raised to Delacroix, and that Delaroche would scarcely be remembered?

## CLIII

At the Salon, the first pictures are always more favorably judged than the last.

## CLIV

In the composition of a competent jury it is not necessary that it should consist of forty members; three or five would be sufficient.

## CLV

The great masters are more wonderful at their homes than at the Louvre, because in looking at them at home one embraces the country in which they were born.

## CLVI

If a painter represents Rembrandt

in his studio he is dominated by Rembrandt; in spite of himself he seeks for effects of light and shade; if he represents Veronese he is possessed by Veronese, and will seek for open-air effects. One enters involuntarily into the temperament of the painter whom one wishes to recall.

## CLVII

One should go much to the Louvre to study and interpret the masters, but never to try to imitate them.

## CLVIII

Quentin Matsys passed, they say, twenty years in executing his masterpiece at the Brussels Museum. Nevertheless, in contemplating this marvel one does not discern the least lassitude, the slightest exhaustion.

## CLIX

They say "The opinion of a painter is always tainted with bias; he only

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judges by his preferences." A con-  
naisseur who loves Ingres has also his  
bias against Delacroix, and *vice versa*.

## CLX

Since the war of 1870, more soldiers  
have been painted than ever.

## CLXI

As a general thing, one must be  
dead in order to sell at a high figure.

## CLXII

It is to the English painters that  
the French school is indebted for the  
artistic evolution of 1830.

## CLXIII

We are passing through an epoch  
in prey to such pictorial monstrosities,  
that people will come, by reaction, to  
do justice to works of fine execution.

## CLXIV

The masters of the eighteenth cent-

ury are especially interesting because they were thoroughly inspired by the manners of their epoch and interpreted them with spirit.

## CLXV

At the Salon the public concerns itself almost exclusively with the subject; the true art of the painter becomes accessory.

## CLXVI

The painter is, in the world of art, the most petted and the most rewarded, and it is he who complains the most.

## CLXVII

A painter is wrong to abandon the country in which he was born and passed his youth.

## CLXVIII

A man should have the courage not to allow the successes of the Salon, the opinion of the press or the

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contingency of recompenses to occupy his mind, and should be chiefly concerned with living up to his own ideal.

## CLXIX

There is no coloring without reflections.

## CLXX

There are masters who have a right to our admiration, but who are no longer of our time.

## CLXXI

How many men of great talent could no longer do at our epoch what they did at their own !

## CLXXII

Do not exert yourself to make too perfect studies from nature. A study should be an exercise without pretension.

## CLXXIII

A painter ought sometimes to consult a sculptor, and *vice versa*.

## CLXXIV

One usually begins a picture with spirit, but often finishes it with a certain melancholy.

## CLXXV

A master sometimes delivers, without being satisfied with it, a picture to which he becomes reconciled upon seeing it again some years later.

## CLXXVI

There always remains something to do in a picture for the artist who is not easily satisfied.

## CLXXVII

It is, however, an art not to retouch what has come at one stroke.

## CLXXVIII

An artist can never sufficiently search into the secrets of his art, but

he should never lose his native simplicity.

## CLXXIX

There is no artist's studio, even a mediocre one, in which a study may not be found superior to his finished works.

## CLXXX

Everything here below is the product of study. One does not play the piano except by exerting one's self to play scales, just as one does not become an accomplished fencer until one has used the plastron for a long time. It would be truly strange if, by exception, the art of painting did not require study.

## CLXXXI

The opinion of inexperienced youth is often more judicious than that of a painter who has succeeded. Youth has the sentiment of the present and the presentiment of the morrow ; the

artist who has succeeded has a predisposition to stiffen himself in the formulas of the previous day, which have brought him his reputation.

## CLXXXII

One sees to-day too many artists attempt all branches of painting with deplorable lack of personal feeling. Rubens or Rembrandt, when they painted genre or landscape, placed on these productions the genius mark of their signature. The painters of to-day, on the contrary, alter their workmanship in changing their kind of painting.

## CLXXXIII

I do not like a model who never moves.

## CLXXXIV

One paints dry and hard at the outset; suppleness only shows itself when the artist is in full possession of his art.

## CLXXXV

To paint a good portrait, it is indispensable to enter into the spirit and the character of the model, and to compel one's self to depict him not only by exactly reproducing his features, but more particularly by interpreting his mind.

## CLXXXVI

One ought not to be forced to paint from the first of January to the thirty-first of December. There is something sad, however, in finding dust on one's palette after an absence.

## CLXXXVII

It is puerile to say, "I have found a fine subject for the next Salon."

## CLXXXVIII

The broad noonday sun discolours; the indefinite and mysterious hours of dawn and twilight are preferable for the painter.

## CLXXXIX

The painter who lives on stored-up memories of travel is an artificial artist who has only retrospective emotions.

## CXC

The virgin forests in which we have not lived have not the eloquence of a well-known and familiar grove.

## CXCI

Put three landscape painters before a landscape and each will interpret it according to his temperament ; nevertheless it is the same landscape. Where, then, is found what it is now agreed to call the tone of nature ?

## CXCII

Painting is nature seen through the prism of an emotion.

## CXCIH

The most beautiful odalisque,

adorned with jewels, will never move me as much as the women of the country in which I was born ; I therefore prefer painting the latter to the former.

## CXCIV

Painters are to be pitied who have not deigned or have not known how to sing of woman and child.

## CXCv

To make a pupil paint many flowers is excellent instruction.

## CXCvI

The student should be forbidden to draw from memory or from *chic*. He ought always to work *de visu*.

## CXCvII

People have a sad tendency to run after the qualities of their neighbors and to neglect those with which they themselves are endowed.

## CXCVIII

One should not systematically prescribe to students historical, mythological or Biblical subjects; it is better that they should interpret subjects bearing upon familiar, every-day life.

## CXCIX

Ingres said: "Drawing is the probability of painting." He might have added that color is the ennobling of it.

## CC

I like, above all, in all the arts, the gifts of nature; they surpass the efforts of academic drudges.

## CCI

The man of genius is he who has received a gift which labor has logically developed and balanced.

## CCII

Many great painters are hurtful to

youth. One must have reached a certain age in order to "embrace" them without danger.

## CCIII

Comfort has been injurious to art.

## CCIV

The execution of a fine painting is agreeable to the touch.

## CCV

A true painter is a thinker withal.

## CCVI

At a certain age, a painter should no longer be afraid of trembling.

## CCVII

A student should draw everything that presents itself to his eyes. One must sow in order to reap.

## CCVIII

Certain Dutch masters appear to

have painted with small pounded stones.

## CCIX

It is easier to do a head in several hours than in several days.

## CCX

To hunt with an important air for the signature of a picture, in order to appear to be a connoisseur, is already an avowal of artistic ignorance.

## CCXI

If the right hand becomes too skilful, one should make use of the left. The brain ought not to allow itself to be dominated by the dexterity of the hand.

## CCXII

It is abnormal to paint a violent movement—a man running, for instance. Impressionable people, at the end of a certain time, would be

tempted to say to him: "Do sit down!"

## CCXIII

The masters have not always produced masterpieces. Happy he who, in our day, shall be able to leave behind him a fine bit of painting!

## CCXIV

Charlet's determined First Empire soldiers disappeared with the epic of which they were the heroes. The soldier of to-day serves his time without convictions, thinking only of his discharge. It is, therefore, no longer a type, and yet we have now more painters of soldiers than in the time of Charlet.

## CCXV

Although France, artistically, leads the world to-day, the Frenchman is nevertheless more a stylist than truly pictorial.

## CCXVI

The public willingly confounds romance with true artistic poetry.

## CCXVII

The public is interested in costume subjects, as it is enamored of the society disguises of a masked ball.

## CCXVIII

Oil painting is far above water color and pastel ; time destroys these last and ennobles the first.

## CCXIX

One should distrust charcoal. It is a flatterer which is satisfied cheaply ; the pencil is more exacting.

## CCXX

The born painter never believes that he has succeeded ; he is constantly seeking to enlarge and elevate his art, even above his strength ;

this is, besides, for an artist, the only means of not weakening at a certain age.

## CCXXI

Studios that are too small produce petty work.

## CCXXII

The painter contemplating nature should depict it so as to preserve the flavor of his first impression.

## CCXXIII

A student should avoid beautifying his model; he ought rather to exaggerate it in order not to detract from its character.

## CCXXIV

A picture should not be of such small dimensions as to lead us to suppose that we are becoming far-sighted.

## CCXXV

Reputations are easy to acquire; what is difficult is to render them lasting.

## CCXXVI

Too good sight is often a fatal gift to a painter, because the retina is maddened by seeing too many things in detail.

## CCXXVII

The Americans have some nineteenth century masterpieces; they have, it is said, the love of Japanese art; if they come to have a Louvre, with their character, their inventive spirit in everything, old Europe is probably destined to one day accept an artistic renovation from young America.

## CCXXVIII

I am a partisan of good picture dealers. It is they who create con-

---

naisseurs, who raise our prices, who uphold and set off our qualities in the eyes of the ignorant, and who save us from having to sing our own praises.

## CCXXIX

One cannot, living at Paris, paint flesh like Rubens; each country gives an individual charm to woman.

## CCXXX

Grace does not exist without strength.

## CCXXXI

We are at an epoch in which the need of attaining originality is so strongly felt that Rome causes us more fear than London.

## CCXXXII

In the future, a German will be prouder of the genius of Albert Dürer than of that of the great Frederick.

## CCXXXIII

A great painter is of all periods; a great politician belongs most frequently only to his epoch.

## CCXXXIV

It is more uncommon to find a painter than a learned man.

## CCXXXV

If neurosis exists, it is an evil which the painter must needs experience.

## CCXXXVI

If the costume of the men of our time be not beautiful, it is not the fault of the painter.

## CCXXXVII

It is easier to find a man of talent than a man of elevated taste.

## CCXXXVIII

All painting should be able to bear close inspection.

## CCXXXIX

A professor may teach principles, but he ought especially to discover and develop the aptitudes of the student.

## CCXL

The public, in the presence of the sea, understands less readily the reserved charms of the morning than the apotheoses of a setting sun.

## CCXLI

The contemplation of the works of a painter of recognized talent causes less emotion than that of an artist less appreciated but nevertheless of greater taste.

## CCXLII

Photography gives the commonplace resemblance that everybody can see; the painter alone penetrates into the intimacy of the model and detects the radiance of the physiognomy.

## CCXLIII

People do not trouble themselves enough in our day about the workmanship, the trade, painting for painting's sake; but they will be forced to return to it, and only those who possess this master quality will be certain of immortality.

## CCXLIV

The frivolous public laughed at a painter who had given to his work the abstract title of "Symphony in White"; the painter had, nevertheless, performed more technically an act of painting than those who have produced so many historical subjects.

## CCXLV

It is only after having executed numerous studies from nature that one may permit himself to paint an impression from her; one ends by wearying of a study, never of an impression.

## CCXLVI

The old masters imbibed from childhood all the knowledge of their teachers; they had not, like us, to discover for themselves the secrets of their art; this is why they were able, in full maturity, to add their individual qualities to their acquired ideas.

## CCXLVII

To cause the picture of a master to be retouched is a crime that the law ought to punish severely.

## CCXLVIII

The art of painting should not be too much encouraged; rather the reverse.

## CCXLIX

It is not always the talent of the master which causes pupils to flock to his studio; it is often the good luck he has had to meet among them a specially endowed nature.

## CCL

One weeps reading a book or listening to music ; one never weeps before a picture, before sculpture.

## CCLI

To those who say that Japanese art has a formula, one may reply that Greek art had also its own.

## CCLII

Nothing is forgiven in a picture with a single figure ; many things are excused in a picture with several figures.

## CCLIII

The masters of the grand epochs have often more faults than those of the decadences.

## CCLIV

If the public were allowed to enter the Salon before the artists, what comical estimates would be obtained !

## CCLV

The bids at public sales are what rank a painter commercially. This is sometimes very unjust.

## CCLVI

Painting is not made for exhibitions. Delicate pictures are annihilated at the Salon; loud and vulgar ones hold their own better.

## CCLVII

Once a member of the Institute, the painter lives to be old, because, at any rate, he remains somebody for the public.

## CCLVIII

There are painters who paint only a single picture every year for the Salon; others paint thirty during their year, and at the most can only exhibit three of them. This is unjust.

## CCLIX

How many pictures do well in an exhibition and ill in a drawing-room, and *vice versa* !

## CCLX

The art of painting has not for its mission to lead on to fortune.

## CCLXI

The public supports a mediocre painter as long as he is young ; once grown old, it abandons him to his sad fate.

## CCLXII

What a mistake to have thought of forming a museum of copies of the masterpieces of foreign museums ! Fine photographs give us a far more just impression of them.

## CCLXIII

Fathers who oblige their sons to become painters, as one becomes a

grocer, are to-day honored. Fifty years ago it was quite the contrary. They will come back to it.

## CCLXIV

An alteration in a picture seems always to do good.

## CCLXV

One should not give, in a picture, an accessory useless to the composition of the subject that one is treating.

## CCLXVI

One may, by instinct alone, become a painter of worth, but one only performs an act of genius in giving proof of great good sense.

## CCLXVII

The sincere approbation of his professional comrades is, for the painter, the most flattering of recompenses.

## CCLXVIII

Nothing can equal the happiness that a painter feels when, after a day's work, he is satisfied with the task accomplished. But, in the contrary case, what despair he experiences !

## CCLXIX

A great reputation is difficult to preserve if one has left few works behind him.

## CCLXX

To live to be very old, and to preserve until the end of one's days a great reputation in the art of painting, seems to me an almost impossible thing.

## CCLXXI

If one laments the premature death of a painter, one should also sometimes mourn for him who, for his art, lives to be too old.

## CCLXXII

A man should not paint continually in his studio.

## CCLXXIII

The magnifying glass has been laughed at ; fine painting ought to be able to withstand it.

## CCLXXIV

The Italian masters, in spite of the brilliancy of their qualities, do not intoxicate us so far as to prevent our criticising form and drawing in them. The color of the Dutch masters, on the contrary, is so magical that it subjugates us and does not leave us the ability to trouble ourselves as to form and drawing.

## CCLXXV

Painters ought to have some knowledge of chemistry. The old masters knew on what and with what they painted—hence the good quality and

the fine preservation of their works. In our day, people paint with anything. The old masters painted for posterity; we paint only for the present.

## CCLXXVI

It is better to enlarge than to diminish an accessory on the first plane.

## CCLXXVII

If a Paris Salon could be exhibited abroad, as a whole, it would have quite another aspect and would be judged quite differently. What a disquieting and capricious thing is painting!

## CCLXXVIII

One generally goes to the Salon to see three or four conspicuous names and to laugh at several eccentrics.

## CCLXXIX

If there were fewer pictures at the Salon, people would not be so eager

---

to leave the galleries to go and look at the sculpture in the garden, while smoking a cigarette.

## CCLXXX

In France, in our day, sculpture is perhaps superior to painting.

## CCLXXXI

Why have those persons who imagine they invented impressionism nearly all the same impression before nature? It seems to me that it should be the contrary.

## CCLXXXII

Art is jealous; it does not forgive even a moment of forgetfulness.

## CCLXXXIII

Certain painters, entering their studios after a visit to the Louvre, say to themselves: "Would my painting hold by the side of such-and-such a

master?" They forget that these great masters have been worked upon by time and that time has not yet been able to occupy itself with them.

## CCLXXXIV

It is a crime to cause Notre Dame de Paris to be scraped; it is a kindness to have Notre Dame de Lorette cleansed. This proves that masterpieces should not be repaired and that decidedly time is a great master.

## CCLXXXV

There are painters possessed by the memory of the masterpieces which they have seen in the museums. If a model presents himself to them, they say: "Look, he reminds me of a head by Holbein that I saw at Dresden!" or "He reminds me of a head by Rembrandt that I saw at Amsterdam," and their imagination goes from Dresden to Amsterdam, without being able to trans-

late the suggestions of their own brain.

## CCLXXXVI

So many painters stop where difficulty begins !

## CCLXXXVII

Instead of expending all the heat of one's temperament on the first draught of a picture, one should husband it in such a manner as to preserve the same ardor until the last stroke of the brush.

## CCLXXXVIII

It is always dangerous to paint a portrait for nothing, for the person who has sat for it never defends it when it is criticised.

## CCLXXXIX

Painting executed in the open air gains in the studio.

## CCXC

Slapdash painting may charm at first sight, but the charm does not last.

## CCXCI

The execution should be adequate to the subject treated.

## CCXCII

The virtuoso should not be confounded with the trickster.

## CCXCIII

A great painter is ordinarily better qualified than a great writer, a great musician or a great sculptor to comprehend the other arts.

## CCXCIV

The Flemings and the Dutch are the first painters of the world.

## CCXCV

A too short arm now and then by Rembrandt is nevertheless "alive"; the arm of an academic drudge, executed in exact proportions, remains inert.

## CCXCVI

Rubens has often been hurtful to the Flemish school, and Van Eyck has never been other than its benefactor.

## CCXCVII

There are great geniuses in painting who have been fatal to youth.

## CCXCVIII

There are painters who have been useful to others and who are worth very little to themselves.

## CCXCIX

Most picture subjects are rather in

the province of illustrated journals than in that of painting.

## CCC

Painting which produces an illusion of reality is an artistic lie.

## CCCI

One should sometimes place his picture in the penumbra in order to properly judge if it preserves its harmony.

## CCCII

What was called a "repoussoir"\* was an error with certain old masters.

## CCCIII

Each country should have its pictorial stamp; each country has its

---

\* A vigorous tone, setting off the light and luminous parts of a picture.

dance: Germany the waltz, Spain the bolero, England the jig, etc.

## CCCIV

In a bovine exhibition, be sure that the public will pause by preference before the five-footed ox.

## CCCV

If the old masters, of no matter what school, could return to earth, be assured that they would not hesitate to cause not a few of their works to disappear.

## CCCVI

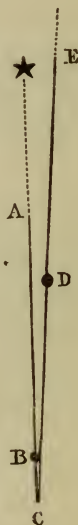
The religion of art abandons most often the painter too much flattered, too much petted, too happy.

## CCCVII

To make to live—that is the great difficulty of painting and its aim.

## CCCVIII

If the perpendicular line C A leads to truth, the oblique line C E, starting from the same point, but deviating, moves farther away from truth the more it is prolonged. The public has but little regard for the painter who has reached the point B of the perpendicular, which leads to the true and the beautiful, and exaggerates the worth of him who has reached the letter D on the oblique line; in its opinion he has mounted higher; the public does not perceive that he moves farther away from the true and the beautiful, the higher he mounts on the line of the false.



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